

Brief

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 INFO RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MANAGUA IMMEDIATE 0247
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 RUEHTG/AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA IMMEDIATE 0366
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EXDIS

MILITARY ADDEESS HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
 TAGS: PFOR, ES, NU, PINR
 SUBJECT: VISIT BY PRESIDENTIAL DELEGATION HEADED BY
 - ASST SEC ABRAMS

1. (SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT DUARTE EXPRESSED HIS PROFOUND
 APPRECIATION FOR PRESIDENT REAGAN'S HAVING SENT A
 PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE TO EL SALVADOR RIGHT AFTER

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THE DEFEAT OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S PROPOSALS TO AID THE NICARAGUAN RESISTANCE IN THE CONGRESS. NATURALLY, HE (DUARTE) HAD BEEN WORRIED ABOUT THE RESOLVE OF THE US, BUT HE ACCEPTED WITHOUT QUESTION ABRAMS' REASSURANCES THAT PRESIDENT REAGAN WAS AS DETERMINED AS EVER AND WOULD BE SUCCESSFUL IN HIS EFFORT TO SECURE ASSISTANCE FOR THE ANTI-SANDINISTA FORCES. DUARTE WAS PLEASED TO HEAR ASST SEC ABRAMS' CONVICTION THAT, IN THE END, THE ADMINISTRATION WILL WIN IN CONGRESS. DUARTE ALSO SAID HE HAD WELCOMED SPECIAL ENVOY AMBASSADOR PHILIP HABIB'S NOMINATION AND RECENT VISIT, AND LOOKED FORWARD TO ESTABLISHING THE SAME SORT OF CLOSE AND PRODUCTIVE WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH HABIB AS HE HAD ENJOYED WITH HARRY SHLAUDAMAN. HE SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THAT ANOTHER TRIP TO THE REGION WAS PLANNED BY AMBASSADOR HABIB, BUT SUGGESTED IT SHOULD NOT REPEAT NOT OCCUR BEFORE A FAVORABLE VOTE IN CONGRESS. DUARTE DESCRIBED HIS OWN INTENTION TO PURSUE A PROGRAM OF ACTION WHICH WOULD PUT FURTHER PRESSURE ON THE SANDINISTAS AND RESTORE CONTROL OVER CENTRAL AMERICAN AFFAIRS TO THE CENTRAL AMERICANS, REMOVING IT FROM THE HANDS OF OUTSIDERS WITH AGENDAS OF THEIR OWN LIKE THE MEXICANS, COLOMBIANS, PANAMANIAN AND OTHER SOUTH AMERICANS. END SUMMARY.

3. ASST SEC ABRAMS, ACCOMPANIED BY [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] COL. OLIVER NORTH (NSC), [REDACTED]

GEN. JOHN GALVIN (CINCSOUTH), AMBASSADOR AND DCM WERE RECEIVED BY PRESIDENT DUARTE, VICE PRESIDENT (AND FOREIGN MINISTER) CASTILLO CLARAMOUNT, MINISTER OF DEFENSE GEN. VIDES CASANOVA, VICE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC SECURITY COL. LOPEZ NUILA, AND ESAF CHIEF OF STAFF GEN. BLANDON FOR AN HOUR AND A HALF'S DISCUSSION OF EVENTS CONCERNING YESTERDAY'S CONGRESSIONAL VOTE ON AID TO THE NICARAGUAN RESISTANCE. DUARTE ALSO HAD FIRST PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSOR-DESIGNATE ABRAHAM RODRIGUEZ AND HIS OLDEST SON, ALEJANDRO DUARTE, SIT IN. ABRAMS BEGAN BY DELIVERING A PERSONAL MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT DUARTE FROM PRESIDENT REAGAN, FOR WHICH DUARTE EXPRESSED PROFOUND APPRECIATION.

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25X1 4. ABRAMS THANKED DUARTE FOR RECEIVING THE GROUP ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE, AND OBSERVED THAT THE VOTE IN CONGRESS HAD OCCURRED AROUND 2:30 P.M. WASHINGTON TIME MARCH 20TH, AND AT 4 P.M. PRESIDENT REAGAN HAD CHAIRED AN NSC MEETING DURING WHICH THE PRESIDENT HAD DECIDED TO SEND ABRAMS TO TEGUCIGALPA, SAN SALVADOR, AND SAN JOSE WITH GEN. GALVIN, [REDACTED] AND COL. NORTH. THE PURPOSE OF THE TRIP WAS TO RE-ASSURE OUR ALLIES IN THE REGION THAT WE REMAIN CONFIDENT WE WILL WIN AID FOR THE NICARAGUAN RESISTANCE. THE ADMINISTRATION HAD LOST BY ONLY 12 VOTES, MEANING IT ONLY HAD TO SWITCH SIX NAY-SAYERS TO TURN THE TIDE. ABRAMS TOLD DUARTE BOTH PRESIDENT REAGAN AND THE ADMINISTRATION WERE CONFIDENT THEY COULD WIN CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL NEXT TIME AROUND. ABRAMS SAID THE VOTE WOULD OCCUR IN THE SENATE NEXT TUESDAY, AND WOULD PROBABLY RETURN TO THE HOUSE DURING THE FIRST WEEK AFTER THE EASTER RECESS. WHATEVER LENGTH OF TIME IS REQUIRED, THE PRESIDENT WILL FINALLY PREVAIL.

5. ABRAMS SAID THAT PRESIDENT REAGAN WANTED TO THANK PRESIDENT DUARTE FOR THE LATTER'S HELP AND ENCOURAGEMENT DURING THE DEBATE IN CONGRESS. EL SALVADOR, ABRAMS ADDED, IS A MODEL FOR THE TYPE OF DEMOCRATIC CHANGE THE U.S. WOULD LIKE TO SEE IN CENTRAL AMERICA. AS LITTLE AS TWO YEARS AGO, HE NOTED, EL SALVADOR WAS A HIGHLY CONTROVERSIAL SUBJECT; "NOW IT IS A CONSENSUS ISSUE." VIRTUALLY EVERYONE IN THE REGION AND IN WASHINGTON HAS ENDORSED PRESIDENT DUARTE'S COURAGEOUS OFFER TO SIT DOWN WITH HIS OWN INTERNAL ARMED OPPOSITION PROVIDED THE SANDINISTAS DO THE SAME WITH THEIRS. ABRAMS SAID PRESIDENT

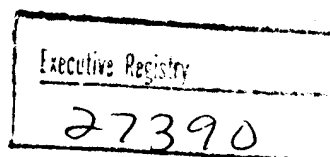
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MILITARY ADDEESS HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

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SUBJECT: VISIT BY PRESIDENTIAL DELEGATION HEADED BY REAGAN HAD MADE A POINT OF ASKING THAT ABRAMS THANK PRESIDENT DUARTE FOR EVERYTHING DUARTE HAS DONE -- NOT JUST IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS, BUT OVER PAST YEARS.

6. ABRAMS WENT ON TO DESCRIBE BRIEFLY EVENTS IN WASHINGTON OF THE LAST SEVERAL WEEKS CULMINATING IN OUR CONCERN THAT OUR ALLIES IN THE REGION WOULD BE NERVOUS ABOUT U.S. STEADFASTNESS FOLLOWING THE NEGATIVE VOTE IN THE CONGRESS YESTERDAY AFTERNOON. ABRAMS SAID THE U.S. WANTED TO MAKE SURE THAT THE PEOPLE IN THE REGION MOST DIRECTLY CONCERNED UNDERSTAND THAT NEITHER PRESIDENT REAGAN NOR HIS GOVERNMENT ARE AMBIVALENT ABOUT THE OUTCOME; THE U.S. IS DETERMINED TO SEE THAT THE NICARAGUAN RESISTANCE GETS THE AID IT NEEDS. HE SAID WE WERE CONCERNED ABOUT THE COSTA RICAN BORDER TALKS WITH NICARAGUA AND ADDED THAT THE DELEGATION PLANNED TO FLY ON TO SAN JOSE THIS AFTERNOON TO DISCUSS THE SITUATION WITH PRESIDENT MONGE. HE NOTED THAT SOME U.S. CONGRESSMEN HAVE BEEN BEWILDERED AND ANGERED BY PRESIDENT-ELECT ARIAS' STATEMENTS AGAINST AID FOR THE NICARAGUAN DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE.

7. ABRAMS VOLUNTEERED THAT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF PRESIDENT DUARTE WERE TO BE WILLING TO MEET WITH MEMBERS OF UNO -- REVELO, CALERO, RIVERA, AND CRUZ, ALTHOUGH ABRAMS NOTED THAT CRUZ WAS PRESENTLY IN EUROPE. DUARTE SAID HE WOULD BE PLEASED TO MEET WITH UNO, NOTING THAT HE HAS ALREADY RECEIVED CALERO, REVELO AND CRUZ SEVERAL TIMES, AND ALSO PASTORA. ABRAMS NOTED THAT THE SECRETARY HAD TOLD PASTORA WE WERE WILLING TO HELP HIS FORCES, PROVIDED THAT THEIR OPERATIONS WERE CLEAN, FREE OF DRUGS, AND COMMITTED TO THE RESTORATION OF GENUINE DEMOCRACY IN NICARAGUA. DUARTE SAID HE HAD, IN FACT, RECEIVED A TELEX FROM UNO YESTERDAY ASKING FOR A MEETING WITH HIM, AND HE HAD REPLIED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE; IT WOULD MEAN POSSIBLE NEGATIVE PUBLICITY FOR DUARTE, BUT HE SAID "I DON'T MIND: I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THEY ARE WORKING FOR DEMOCRACY IN NICARAGUA."

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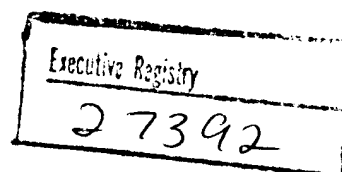
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8. PRESIDENT DUARTE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION TO PRESIDENT REAGAN FOR HAVING SENT THE DELEGATION TO SAN SALVADOR. HE SAID HE AND HIS ADVISORS HAD BEEN PROFOUNDLY CONCERNED BY THE NEGATIVE OUTCOME OF THE VOTE IN CONGRESS, BUT SAID HE ACCEPTED AT FULL FACE VALUE ABRAMS' REASSURANCE THAT THE PRESIDENT IS DETERMINED TO PRESS ON TOWARD ULTIMATE VICTORY -- APPROVAL OF FUNDING FOR THE ANTI-SANDINISTA FORCES STRUGGLING TO RESTORE DEMOCRACY IN NICARAGUA. HE SAID THAT WHILE HE WAS GRATEFUL FOR THE PRESIDENT'S KIND WORDS ABOUT HIS OWN ROLE IN CENTRAL AMERICA, "WHATEVER WE HAVE DONE HERE IS SMALL IN COMPARISON WITH WHAT THE UNITED STATES HAS DONE. WE WILL NOT FORGET THAT WHEN WE WERE STRUGGLING TO PRESERVE THE POSSIBILITY OF OUR MAINTAINING OUR FREEDOM, YOU (THE US) CAME ALONG AND GAVE US A HAND." REFERRING TO MOD GENERAL VIDES, SEATED TO HIS LEFT, DUARTE SAID "OUR ARMED FORCES HAVE FOLLOWED A STRAIGHT LINE IN THE DEFENSE OF DEMOCRACY AND UNDERSTAND THAT EL SALVADOR WILL ONLY RECEIVE U.S. HELP IF THEY CONTINUE TO FOLLOW A STRAIGHT LINE." DUARTE WENT ON TO ADD THAT HE HAD ALWAYS TOLD AMERICAN VISITORS AND INTERLOCUTORS, INCLUDING THE MANY CONGRESSMEN AND SENATORS WITH WHOM HE HAS SPOKEN IN RECENT WEEKS, THAT HE DID NOT WISH TO BE DRAWN INTO INTERNAL AMERICAN POLITICAL DEBATES -- BUT AT THE SAME TIME HE HAD TOLD THEM THAT THEY SHOULD BE IN NO DOUBT THAT HE REGARDED THE ANTI-SANDINISTA FORCES AS A BARRIER TO MANAGUA'S SUPPORT FOR SALVADORAN GUERRILLAS, AND THAT ANYTHING WHICH AIDED THE NICARAGUAN RESISTANCE CONTRIBUTED DIRECTLY TO EL SALVADOR'S STRUGGLE TO DEFEAT A COMMUNIST-SPONSORED INSURGENCY IN THIS COUNTRY.

9. DUARTE PROCEEDED TO BRIEFLY DESCRIBE HIS OWN PLANS FOR FURTHER ACTION TO PUT PRESSURE ON THE SANDINISTAS, AND RESTORE TO THE CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRIES A GREATER MEASURE OF CONTROL OVER THEIR OWN AFFAIRS, PROGRESSIVELY PRUNING BACK THE INFLUENCE OF THE MEXICANS, COLOMBIANS, BRAZILIANS,

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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PFOR, ES, NU, PINR
SUBJECT: VISIT BY PRESIDENTIAL DELEGATION HEADED BY PANAMANIAN, AND OTHER INTERLOPERS WHO ALL TOO FREQUENTLY SEEMED TO BE RUNNING INTERFERENCE FOR THE SANDINISTAS, CUBANS, AND OTHER SOVIET LACKEYS. DUARTE SAID HE INTENDS TO SUGGEST TO HIS CENTRAL AMERICAN PRESIDENTIAL COLLEAGUES THAT THEY INVITE THE FIVE NATIONAL ARCHBISHOPS TO THE FORTHCOMING CENTRAL AMERICAN SUMMIT MEETING IN ESQUIPULAS. DUARTE SAID HE EXPECTED THAT ORTEGA WOULD TURN THE PROPOSAL DOWN, BECAUSE TO ACCEPT WOULD SIMPLY ADD TO THE PRESSURE ON THE SANDINISTAS. HE ADDED THAT THE POINT OF HIS PROPOSAL FOR A CENTRAL AMERICAN PARLIAMENT WAS PRECISELY TO PROVIDE ANOTHER EXCLUSIVELY CENTRAL AMERICAN FORUM IN WHICH THE SANDINISTAS WOULD BE REPEATEDLY REPUDIATED BY CENTRAL AMERICANS THEMSELVES. AMBASSADOR CORR ASKED WHETHER PANAMA WOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE ESQUIPULAS SUMMIT, NOTING THAT IF IT WERE, IT COULD TIP THE INTERNAL REGIONAL BALANCE AGAINST THE DEMOCRACIES, SINCE PANAMA HAS A NON-CENTRAL AMERICAN AGENDA OF ITS OWN AND WOULD JOIN WITH THE GUATEMALANS AND SANDINISTAS TO TAKE A POSITION INIMICAL TO THAT OF COSTA RICA, EL SALVADOR AND HONDURAS. FOREIGN MINISTER CASTILLO CLARAMOUNT SAID PANAMA HAD NOT BEEN INVITED TO THE ESQUIPULAS MEETING, BUT PRESIDENT DEL VALLE SAID HE WANTED TO BE. DUARTE AND CASTILLO CLARAMOUNT BOTH ACKNOWLEDGED THE PROBLEM WITH PANAMA, AND DUARTE ADDED WITH SOME EMPHASIS THAT HIS PRINCIPAL CURRENT GOAL -- AND THE EXPLICIT PURPOSE FOR HIS FORTHCOMING TRAVEL TO BRAZIL, URUGUAY AND ARGENTINA -- WAS TO TRY TO MOUNT COUNTERVAILING PRESSURE AGAINST THE MEXICANS, PANAMANIAN, AND COLOMBIANS -- AND TO RESTORE CONTROL OVER CENTRAL AMERICAN MATTERS TO CENTRAL AMERICAN HANDS (IN EFFECT, BREAKING THE

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IRON GRIP OF THE CONTADORA GROUP). HE VOLUNTEERED AS AN ASIDE THAT HE HAD ORIGINALLY DECIDED AGAINST GOING TO PERU BECAUSE OF ALAN GARCIA'S EFFORTS TO INJECT HIMSELF INTO THE CENTRAL AMERICAN PROBLEM, BUT GARCIA "WROTE ME SUCH A NICE LETTER THAT I FELT I COULDN'T TURN HIM DOWN."

10. ABRAMS CONCLUDED BY REPEATING HIS CONVICTION THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD ULTIMATELY WIN ITS EFFORT TO PERSUADE CONGRESS TO FUND ASSISTANCE TO THE ANTI-SANDINISTA ARMED OPPOSITION. HE SAID "THE PRESIDENT IS ABSOLUTELY DETERMINED NOT TO LEAVE THE SOVIET UNION DOMINANT IN CENTRAL AMERICA; WE WILL NEVER ALLOW THAT." AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION HAS NEARLY THREE YEARS LEFT IN OFFICE, AND THUS HAS AMPLE OPPORTUNITY REMAINING TO FORCE CHANGE INSIDE NICARAGUA. REFERRING TO U.S. CONCERNS ABOUT BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN COSTA RICA AND NICARAGUA ON THE FRONTIER ISSUE, CASTILLO CLARAMOUNT SAID HE HAD RAISED THE MATTER WITH COSTA RICAN PRESIDENT-ELECT ARIAS AND HIS FOREIGN MINISTER-DESIGNATE MADRIGAL, WHO ACKNOWLEDGED FULLY THE DANGER IN ALLOWING THE CENTRAL AMERICANS TO BE PICKED OFF ONE AT A TIME BY THE SANDINISTAS IN BILATERAL DEALINGS; ARIAS SAID COSTA RICA WAS FULLY COMMITTED TO THE PRINCIPLE OF MULTI-LATERALISM AND WOULD NEVER ABANDON ITS DEMOCRATIC CENTRAL AMERICAN PARTNERS FOR THE SAKE OF NARROW SOLUTIONS ON BILATERAL ISSUES. DUARTE HAD EVINCED SKEPTICISM, AND SAID HE HIMSELF HAD TOLD ARIAS "IT WOULD BE A FATAL MISTAKE FOR US TO BE PICKED OFF ONE BY ONE IN BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SANDINISTAS." HE SAID ARIAS HAD REASSURED HIM AS WELL THAT HE (ARIAS) WAS AS DEDICATED AS EVER TO THE PRINCIPLE OF DEMOCRATIC CENTRAL AMERICAN SOLIDARITY.

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END OF MESSAGE

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